

# NAMUYI TIBETAN *p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>* RITUALS AND ORAL CHANTS

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## ABSTRACT

ʂa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> (b. 1939) is a Namuyi *p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>* - a traditional Namuyi religious practitioner/ specialist - who chants and conducts religious rituals. He lives and practices in Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China. This article introduces *p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>* ʂa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> and the many hours of his oral materials recorded by Libu Lakhi in 2009 that are archived at <http://tinyurl.com/lgf3row>. In addition, aspects of Namuyi religion are described, including terms of mountain deities, ill omens and taboos, the *p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>*, ʂa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>, chants, and a personal account of a ritual done in Dashui Village, Minsheng Township, Xichang City, Sichuan Province in March 2013. An appendix, seven photographs, and a diagram provide additional detail.

## KEYWORDS

ʂi<sup>54</sup>vi<sup>54</sup>, *p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>*, chants, cultural preservation, digital archives, Liangshan, mountain deities, Namuyi, Sichuan, Tibetan religion

## INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

This article focuses on *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* (b. 1939), a traditional religious practitioner, and his oral texts in the larger context of Namuyi (na<sup>53</sup> mzi<sup>53</sup>, Namuzi) Tibetan religious belief and ritual.<sup>2</sup> The Namuyi have a population of about 5,000, speak a language within the Qiangic branch (Sun 2001) or Southern Qiangic (Chirkova nd) of the Tibeto-Burman language family, and live in Muli Tibetan Autonomous County, Xichang City, Yanyuan County, and Mianning County in Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province; and in Jiulong County, Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, PR China. The Namuyi have been introduced elsewhere in terms of language and culture (Libu Lakhi et al. 2009a, 2009b, 2009c, 2007; Gordon 2005; Huang and Renzeng Wangmu 1991; Liu 1996; Wellens 2010) and I will not repeat that here.<sup>3</sup>

My knowledge of Namuyi religious belief is cursory. The information presented in this article comes mostly from my father (li<sup>33</sup>bu<sup>33</sup> sə<sup>21</sup>pə<sup>54</sup>, b. 1941). But even the knowledge of experts has limits. While preparing this text, I consulted both Father and *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* but when, for example, I asked why dreaming of bees was a portent of evil, *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* and Father both said that they did not know and that it was a custom from our ancestors.

Some years ago, an anonymous reviewer of a paper I had co-authored, enthusiastically conjectured that the Namuyi might simply

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<sup>1</sup> I thank the editors of *AHP*, Gabriela Samcewicz, and Gaye Sargent, among others, for helping with this paper.

<sup>2</sup> na<sup>54</sup>mzi<sup>54</sup> is the endonym for what is more generally referred to in the literature as "Namuyi." I have chosen to use the latter in this paper due to it being more recognizable by other scholars who study the ethnic groups of Southwest China. na<sup>54</sup>mzi<sup>54</sup> is also the term used by na<sup>54</sup>mzi<sup>54</sup> to refer to all Tibetans. na<sup>54</sup>mzi<sup>54</sup> refer to their language as na<sup>54</sup>mzi<sup>54</sup> kʰa<sup>21</sup>tho<sup>21</sup>. In this article, na<sup>54</sup>mzi<sup>54</sup> kʰa<sup>21</sup>tho<sup>21</sup> is written in the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).

<sup>3</sup> The language is tonal indicated by the superscripted numbers in na<sup>54</sup>mzi<sup>54</sup> kʰa<sup>21</sup>tho<sup>21</sup>. All footnote numbers appear at the end of sentences after the period.

be a branch of the Yi, given the *yi* in the Sinicised term "Namuyi." In fact, "Yi" is a term created by the Chinese to describe a group of people who they consider to be culturally distinct from their own culture, that of the Han. It is unlikely that it has any bearing on the identity of the Namuyi. Furthermore, the Yi category includes very diverse people as noted by Nérot (2012:24), who writes that the Yi nationality is made up of diverse ethnic groups living in Yunnan, Sichuan, and Guizhou provinces that have distinctively different cultural and linguistic characteristics.

I am periodically asked to describe similarities between *na<sup>54</sup>mzi<sup>54</sup>kha<sup>21</sup>tho<sup>21</sup>* and the language spoken by the Nuosu (Yi), whom Namuyi refer to as *gvy<sup>21</sup>cy<sup>33</sup>*, who also reside in this region. I partially addressed this issue in the context of the *na<sup>54</sup>mzi<sup>54</sup>kha<sup>21</sup>tho<sup>21</sup>* and Nuosu spoken in Dashui Village (Libu Lakhi et al. 2009b:302).<sup>4</sup> Briefly, the two languages are mutually incomprehensible, although there are a number of shared lexical items.

When I asked Father how Nuosu and Namuyi religion compared, he said:

They are very different. During rituals, *gvy<sup>21</sup>cy<sup>33</sup> pha<sup>54</sup>tsa<sup>54</sup>* 'Nuosu religious specialists' / 'bimo' don't venerate mountain deities.<sup>5</sup> The *gvy<sup>21</sup>cy<sup>33</sup> pha<sup>54</sup>tsa<sup>54</sup>* summons his teacher's spirit, his teacher's teacher's spirit, and so on. They perform rituals with their masters' spirits' help by calling the spirits of these ancestors and making offerings to them. In cases where they need to call mountain deities, they call them only after they have finished calling their masters' spirits. Their previous masters' spirits are the most important spirits when they conduct rituals.

But we Namuyi call *ci<sup>54</sup>vi<sup>54</sup>* 'mountain deities' at the beginning of every ritual, make offerings at the end point of each chanting session throughout the whole ritual process, and then send *ci<sup>54</sup>vi<sup>54</sup>* off at the end of the ritual.<sup>6</sup> Namuyi ritual specialists

<sup>4</sup> Nuosu language = *no<sup>33</sup>su<sup>33</sup> ho<sup>21</sup>*; Nuosu speech = *no<sup>33</sup>su<sup>33</sup> do<sup>21</sup>ma<sup>33</sup>*.

<sup>5</sup> According to Harrel (2001a:3), a *bimo* is a "priest."

<sup>6</sup> There are no specific figures of mountain deities among the Namuyi in the

also call their masters' spirits, but only after *gi<sup>54</sup>vi<sup>54</sup>* are invited. Our life depends on *gi<sup>54</sup>vi<sup>54</sup>*.

Traditionally, every Namuyi child becomes the child of *gi<sup>54</sup>vi<sup>54</sup>* by inviting a *p<sup>ha</sup>ts<sup>ə</sup>*<sup>54</sup> to conduct the *pje<sup>21</sup>ka<sup>21</sup>p<sup>h</sup>se<sup>54</sup>* ritual that introduces the child to the mountain deities, thirty to forty days after the birth.

Another difference is in the ritual of sending off a deceased soul. *gvu<sup>21</sup>cy<sup>33</sup> p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>ts<sup>ə</sup>ts<sup>ə</sup>*<sup>54</sup> do the 'leading the deceased soul back' ritual in an easterly direction because their ancestors were from the east. But we [Namuyi] do the ritual in the opposite direction, because our ancestors were from the west. The soul of the deceased must be sent back in the direction from which our ancestors came.

#### *GA<sup>54</sup>HA<sup>54</sup>*

The *ga<sup>54</sup>ha<sup>54</sup>* 'happy deities', a compound word consisting of the morphemes *ga<sup>54</sup>* (Tib *dga*) 'happy' and *ha<sup>54</sup>* (Tib *lha*) 'deity', is an an important concept for Namuyi and worthy of detailed discussion. Today younger people tend to say *ga<sup>54</sup>ha<sup>54</sup>* referring to deities, while those born before about 1955 tend to say *ga<sup>54</sup>ka<sup>54</sup>* - the latter employing a fricative as a common pronunciation of the written Tibetan. Furthermore, many young people in my village today just say *ga<sup>54</sup>ha<sup>54</sup>*, changing it phonologically from the fricative *ka<sup>54</sup>* to the approximant *la<sup>54</sup>*, and then shifting its place of articulation from aveolar into the current point of the glottal approximant *ha<sup>54</sup>*.

Furthermore, *ga<sup>54</sup>ha<sup>54</sup>* also refers to both the sacrifice place (see below), and deities and deceased ancestral spirits. Spirits of deceased family relatives are placed into two general categories. The first includes those who died naturally and peacefully from old age. They are respected and offered libations of liquor and food during

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Xichang area and no folktales describe them. They are just there.

occasions such as the New Year. The second category includes those who died unwillingly and fearfully. Those in the latter group are not respected and their spirits are not included in the semantic scope of the term *ga<sup>54</sup>ha<sup>54</sup>*.

*ga<sup>54</sup>ha<sup>54</sup>* is understood and employed pragmatically, depending on context. In a Namuyi home, the sacrifice place where the deities and deceased ancestral spirits are propitiated with libations is located on the left side of the hearth. For instance, if one says, "Put the liquor up on the *ga<sup>54</sup>ha<sup>54</sup>*," it refers to the concrete "sacrifice place" as opposed to the abstract "ancestral spirits" when liquor is actually offered, i.e., pouring a bit of liquor in a cup or bowl and placing it on the sacrifice place when rituals are performed during weddings, the New Year period, and so on.

Furthermore, if a Namuyi student says *ga<sup>54</sup>ha<sup>54</sup> k<sup>h</sup>i<sup>33</sup> nda<sup>33</sup>* 'very good deities/ spirits' with regards to taking an exam, it means 'very good luck'.

*ga<sup>54</sup>ha<sup>54</sup> q<sup>h</sup>vu<sup>33</sup>* 'calling the deities and spirits' is used in a specific context that only occurs during a ritual when a religious specialist must keep engaging mountain deities and his previous masters' spirits by constantly calling to them, offering libations, and chanting throughout the whole ritual process. It is believed that the rituals are ineffective if the deities and masters' spirits are displeased and if they do not support the issue the ritual is intended to resolve. Within this context, the meaning of *ga<sup>54</sup>ha<sup>54</sup>* is confined to the religious specialist's mountain deities and the spirits of his previous masters from whom he learned rituals and chantings.

#### HE YAOHUA (1985) AND SONG ZHAOLING (2004)

Little has been written about Namuyi religion. *pi<sup>21</sup>* is the term that is commonly used to signify "ritual" and "conducting ritual." He Yaohua (1985) confidently places Namuyi religion, its origins, and its history in the pejorative and general category Xifan 'Western Barbarians' (Harrell 2001b), along with the Paimuyi, Duoxu, Lisu, Xumi, and

Ersu,<sup>7</sup> and postulates that the religion of the "Xifan" is a combination of Tibetan Buddhism or "Lamaism and Bon."<sup>8</sup> This sweeping oversimplification might have been strengthened if He Yaohua had studied the "small Tibetan sub-groups" as he terms them, and then presented generalizations based on those detailed studies.

Confusion is created as soon as the Namuyi are placed in the Xifan category. Labeling the Namuyi - along with Pumi, Lisu, Ersu, and others - in the "Xifan" category creates a confusing psychological space outside the categories of Khams, Amdo, and Central Tibetan. The Xifan category for the Namuyi seems a place for people who, though they might be classified officially as "Tibetan," are not actually "real Tibetans."

It is also necessary to consider what local Namuyi think. If a Lhasa Tibetan, for example, visits a Namuyi family, they are seen as Namuyi by the host family, despite speaking mutually incomprehensible languages/ dialects. Namuyi believe that while many other Tibetans differ linguistically and culturally from Namuyi, all Tibetans are Namuyi.

With regard to Bon in the Tibetan-Yi Corridor, Shi (2002) suggests that there is no contemporary evidence to support connection between ancient Tibetan Bon and current religious forms practiced among Tibetans in southeast and southwest Sichuan.<sup>9</sup> Consequently, it is difficult to grasp how He Yaohua could envision a pan Namuyi-Pumi-other-groups culture at this early stage of research.

It should also be noted that even within Namuyi communities,

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<sup>7</sup> For more on the Paimuyi (Pumi, Prinmi), Duoxu, Lisu, Xumi, and Ersu, see Ding (2014), Chirkova (2014) Yu (2007), Chirkova (2011), and Schmitt (2011), respectively.

<sup>8</sup> See Wu (2015) for details on the historical use of the term "Xifan" in Lianghsan. Wu writes that "Even today, their [Ersu] Han neighbors in villages still call them *Xifan*, which means "western barbarian", or *Fanzu*, which means "barbarian nationality", in Sichuan dialect of Mandarin."

<sup>9</sup> The Tibetan-Yi corridor includes the Lou-Yu region from Gansu in the north to the southern slopes of the Himalayas, where areas of Han, Tibetan, and Yi ethnicity intersect, and which also contains a number of other ethnicities (Wang and Huters 2011:190).

there are variant religious forms. Certain information He Yaohua presented and attributed to Luoguodi is not in accordance with what is practiced and believed by other Namuyi. For instance, according to He Yaohua, a horse is used in a "Soul Leading" ritual in Mianning to lead the soul of the deceased person back to *n̄i<sup>33</sup>ma<sup>33</sup> ṣa<sup>21</sup>sa<sup>21</sup>*, the location from which Namuyi say they migrated to Liangshan, referred to by many Tibetans as Nyima Lhasa. However, according to the migration route remembered by religious specialists and elders among Namuyi in the Xichang area, the final destination of the soul on earth is *phu<sup>54</sup>ji<sup>33</sup>ḥa<sup>21</sup>dzy<sup>21</sup>kʰvu<sup>21</sup>*, a place beyond Lhasa. The exact location of *phu<sup>54</sup>ji<sup>33</sup>ḥa<sup>21</sup>dzy<sup>21</sup>kʰvu<sup>21</sup>* is unknown. Once the soul reaches here, it goes into the sky through a cloud door.

Additionally, according to He Yaohua's data from Luoguodi, a white stone that is believed to possess a deity is respected while in Xichang, a pyramid-shaped stone without color preference is put on the *ga<sup>54</sup>ḥa<sup>54</sup>* in Namuyi homes. In the Xichang area, *pʰa<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>* also use the stone, but the significance as to why it is used in rituals today is unknown.

Song's (2004) book consists mostly of photographs taken of portions of a scroll book (twenty centimeters high and ten meters long) from Mianning that he says is used in rituals and related to the Namuyi. The pictures are interspersed with comments on Namuyi history and religion.<sup>10</sup>

Song contends that images of animals, landscape, people, and so on depicted in the scroll constitute the ancient Namuyi logographic written system. The scroll plates are accompanied by an

<sup>10</sup> The funeral ritual is critical because it marks the rite that pacifies deceased souls by guiding them back to the sky along the Namuyi ancestors' migration route. As mentioned earlier, a Namuyi religious specialist historically chanted all the place names from the place where the corpse is laid to the final destination on earth and then on to the sky through a cloud door, mentioned earlier. A scroll pictograph book depicting all these places is owned by Zhu Xiaohua in Muli County today. Wang (2012) uses this as reference to describe some useful details along with initial interpretations of these place names. However, today most Namuyi religious practitioners do not have such books. Instead, they chant the place names from memory.

archaic form of Tibetan script that requires further research to fully decipher.

Song mentions the Namuyi religious specialists  $p^h a^{54} tsə^{54}$ ,  $a^{54} sə^{33}$ , and  $p^h æ^{33} mi^{33}$  and their respective activities and ritual implements. He attempts to draw similarities between Namuyi and Naxi, Pumi, and Mosuo religious specialists. For example, he suggests that the Namuyi  $p^h a^{54} tsə^{54}$  is similar to the *dongba* (Naxi), *shaba* (Ersu), *bimo* (Yi), and *hangui* (Pumi) without providing specific points of commonality.

Song's introduction contains factual errors. For example, the caption on the right bottom corner of page eighteen reads "An  $a^{54} sə^{33}$  reading scripture." Song provides no further information. However, the person depicted in the photo lived in Xiangshui Village in 2014; he is a  $p^h a^{54} tsə^{54}$ , not an  $a^{54} sə^{33}$ ; and he was chanting from memory, not reading a scripture.

Song also suggests (15) that when a  $p^h a^{54} tsə^{54}$  conducts a ritual he goes into a trance state while producing various ear-piercing, strange sounds. This imaginative statement does not reflect reality. A Namuyi  $p^h a^{54} tsə^{54}$  does not go into trance when a ritual begins and utterances by a  $p^h a^{54} tsə^{54}$  and his assistants are considered melodious and able to cure illness, not ear-piercing.

## MOUNTAIN DEITIES

$əi^{54} vi^{54}$  'mountain deities' are believed to live in the sky and atop high mountains. They have anthropomorphic characteristics, for example, there are male and female mountain deities who marry, have family members, and so on.

Dashui Village is at the foot of a mountain. While the mountain has no name, the peak of the mountain is called  $tʂʰa^{21} la^{21} pbu^{54}$ . This name and this peak refer to a male mountain deity. To the northwest there is another peak named  $tʂʰa^{21} la^{21} ma^{54}$ , which is a female deity and the companion of  $tʂʰa^{21} la^{21} pbu^{54}$ . The shape of

ts<sup>h</sup>a<sup>21</sup>la<sup>21</sup> ma<sup>54</sup> is such that villagers say it seems she is turning her face away from ts<sup>h</sup>a<sup>21</sup>la<sup>21</sup> pbu<sup>54</sup> because he farted.

Elders believe that the Namuyi are the nominal children of ci<sup>54</sup>vi<sup>54</sup> 'mountain deities'. On special days such as the Lunar New Year period and weddings, ci<sup>54</sup>vi<sup>54</sup> must be respected and offered the freshest and tastiest food, such as rice and animal blood. If such sacrifices are not offered, there is fear that people and livestock may become ill and there will be no harvest, or that the harvest will be very limited. A few old men pray to the mountain deities when children become ill and when livestock sicken and die (Libu Lakhi et al. 2009a:25-26).

za<sup>21</sup>

za<sup>21</sup>, which are thought to be green in color, are the assistants of mountain deities. A za<sup>21</sup> was earlier defined by Libu Lakhi et al. (2009a:196) as a:

...manifestation of ci<sup>54</sup>vi<sup>54</sup> and is about the size of a round bean. There are various za<sup>21</sup>. A p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>ts<sup>h</sup>ø<sup>54</sup> often summons za<sup>21</sup> to help during rituals. If a p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>ts<sup>h</sup>ø<sup>54</sup> is very powerful, many za<sup>21</sup> come as he chants. li<sup>33</sup>bu<sup>33</sup> sø<sup>21</sup>pø<sup>54</sup> (b. 1941) said that za<sup>21</sup> fall one after another in front of the container when he chants if he is powerful.

Father said that, nowadays, p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>ts<sup>h</sup>ø<sup>54</sup> lack the power to summon za<sup>21</sup>. li<sup>33</sup>bu<sup>33</sup> ta<sup>21</sup>ndi<sup>21</sup> was the last p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>ts<sup>h</sup>ø<sup>54</sup> in my clan (the Libu Clan) as recorded in the story *The Religious Specialist* li<sup>33</sup>bu<sup>33</sup> ta<sup>21</sup>ndi<sup>21</sup>, written in na<sup>54</sup>mzi<sup>54</sup> kha<sup>21</sup>th<sup>h</sup>o<sup>21</sup> in IPA and glossed in Tibetan, Chinese, and English in Libu Lahki et al. (2009a:195-219). Briefly, li<sup>33</sup>bu<sup>33</sup> ta<sup>21</sup>ndi<sup>21</sup> was a powerful p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>ts<sup>h</sup>ø<sup>54</sup> who invited za<sup>21</sup> to assist him and then he died. However, according to instructions that he had given earlier, his disciples pulverized the za<sup>21</sup>, put the resultant powder in his nose and mouth, thereby returning him to life.

## ILL OMENS AND TABOOS

Dreams of bees, carrying or cutting wood, and building a house are all considered bad omens. Such dreams predict the death of a relative, a fellow villager, or a person living in a nearby village.

*p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>* or older, experienced men of both Namuyi and Nuosu cultures, can also predict good or bad fortunes by examining the top of a chicken skull and the chicken's tongue tip, and interpreting the two portions of the top of chicken skull and tongue. Father looks at a chicken skull and chicken tongue during rituals and when chickens are killed and cooked for guests. The skull's left side represents the host family. The right half represents those from outside the family and distant relatives.<sup>11</sup> It is considered auspicious if the skull has no stains. In contrast, a stain on the left side of the skull indicates bad luck for the host family. A stain on the right side signifies bad luck for others. For example, during a home visit in February 2014, my family killed a chicken during a ritual. After examining the chicken skull, Father said there was a smoke-like stain on the right side of the skull. Such a stain is regarded as a very bad omen. Father then threw the chicken skull from the hearth toward the entrance of the house and said there would be bad news soon of someone dying, but not in our family. If a chicken skull is without stains, it is usually tossed to the sacrifice place.

## RELIGIOUS PRACTITIONERS

Father told me that, when he was a child, there were three separate types of religious practitioners: the *a<sup>54</sup>sə<sup>54</sup>* (religious practitioner who conducts rituals by reading Tibetan scriptures), *p<sup>h</sup>æ<sup>33</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>* (spirit medium possessed by mountain deities), and *p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>*. The *p<sup>h</sup>æ<sup>33</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>*

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<sup>11</sup> Left and right may be understood as the examiner standing behind the chicken consequently, the left side of the skull refers also to the examiner's left side.

shook when he was in trance and, once he was possessed, said what needed to be done to, for example, cure illness. Father also said he had never seen or heard of a female religious practitioner.

The *p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>*

A *p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>* is in many ways an ordinary villager. He is married, has children, and engages in farming, herding, and migrant labor. If he is at home, he visits families who invite him to conduct rituals, both in his village and from other communities. Traditionally, a *p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>* was highly respected among Namuyi because of his ability to solve problems by communicating with mountain deities and was invited to a home to perform rituals during major life events, e.g., funerals, weddings, in times of human and livestock illness, and three months after birth of a child to give the baby a name. He also performed such public rituals as asking for rain during drought.

An apprenticeship with a *p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>* teacher requires three to ten years to become a recognized *p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>*. If the student has a very strong interest and memorizes the chants well, it might take only three years. For others, ten years might be required before the teacher gives approval. A son whose father was a *p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>* inherits his father's *p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>* implements. Most men who become *p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>* do so because this is what they want and because their parents urge them to do this.

In 2013, I noticed that families invited *p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>* to their homes to conduct death rituals, when a family member was ill, when livestock were ill, or when there was a poor harvest. In a few cases, a Namuyi might die in the hospital in, for example, Xichang City, and the family would choose to cremate their remains. In such a case, a *p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>* might be invited to conduct rituals outside of the home after the cremation. In the case of such a death, some families might choose to conduct no rituals at all.

A *p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>* begins a ritual by inviting mountain deities and his previous teachers' *qo<sup>33</sup>eu<sup>33</sup>* 'spirits', while chanting and offering fresh

liquor, animal blood, and incense.<sup>12</sup> The *p<sup>ha</sup>ts<sup>ə</sup>sa<sup>54</sup>* then becomes the representative of the mountain deities and what he now chants is the speech of the mountain deities. He can now solve problems. The ritual's end is marked by offerings of liquor, meat, and incense and the *p<sup>ha</sup>ts<sup>ə</sup>sa<sup>54</sup>* politely asking the mountain deities and his previous teachers to leave.

In 2014, *p<sup>ha</sup>ts<sup>ə</sup>sa<sup>54</sup>* performed less frequently than in the past. Families preferred to send ill family members to local health clinics, and weddings were generally held in township center restaurants, rather than following the traditional model of a village wedding that lasted three days and two nights and featured dances, singing, and religious activities performed by the *p<sup>ha</sup>ts<sup>ə</sup>sa<sup>54</sup>*.<sup>13</sup>

While visiting Namuyi communities in Xichang City and Mianning County, I heard accounts of *a<sup>54</sup>sa<sup>54</sup>*, but I have never met any. I was told by local elders that *a<sup>54</sup>sa<sup>54</sup>* learned Tibetan by traveling to Tibetan areas. When they returned, they read Tibetan texts during rituals.

sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>

In 2013, *p<sup>ha</sup>ts<sup>ə</sup>sa<sup>54</sup>* lived in Dongfeng Village, Zeyuan Township, Mianning County, Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture, which is about three hours by minibus taxi from my home in Dashui Village, Minsheng Township, Xichang City.<sup>14</sup> *p<sup>ha</sup>ts<sup>ə</sup>sa<sup>54</sup>* told me that his father was an *a<sup>54</sup>sa<sup>54</sup>* who was often invited by families living in their home village, as well as other villages, to conduct rituals, and that he

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<sup>12</sup> The *p<sup>ha</sup>ts<sup>ə</sup>sa<sup>54</sup>* summons his teacher's spirit, his teacher's teacher's spirit, and so on. Chickens are usually killed, however, pigs, goats, or sheep might also be sacrificed.

<sup>13</sup> For a modern restaurant wedding, see Luodu Gezu's fifty-eight minute documentary *Namyi Wedding in Mianning County* of a Namuyi family holding a wedding for their son and daughter-in-law in January 2008 in the son's parents' home and in the Jinping Restaurant in Mianning County Town (<http://tinyurl.com/nafhwdj>, accessed 10 July 2015).

<sup>14</sup> *p<sup>ha</sup>ts<sup>ə</sup>sa<sup>54</sup>* was born in Xiangshui Village, Xiangshui Township, Xichang City.

was greatly respected. *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* said that he was supposed to continue in his father's footsteps by learning to read Tibetan scriptures.

When *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* was about seventeen years old (~1954), his father died. During the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), village temples were destroyed, scriptures were burned, and religious activities were forbidden. Discouraged by this atmosphere, he gave up the idea of becoming an *a<sup>54</sup>ṣə<sup>54</sup>* or *pʰa<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>*. It was only after the Cultural Revolution that his mother and other close relatives encouraged him to study with a *pʰa<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>* teacher on the grounds that there would be no one to conduct religious activities for villagers if he did not become a *pʰa<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>*.

I do not remember when I first met *pʰa<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup> sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>*. As he was married to Father's eldest sister (*na<sup>33</sup> ḷgvu<sup>54</sup>*, 1940-2010), my family periodically invited him to our home when he was living in Xiangshui Village. I enjoyed the candy that he gave children when he visited. After I entered middle school, I rarely saw him because I stayed at school except for the holidays. My family did not invite *pʰa<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>* to our home during the time I was away, because it is inauspicious if rituals are conducted when even one family member is absent.

In 2009, after graduating from Qinghai Normal University in Xining City, I was working for the Tibetan Music Project.<sup>15</sup> With a small PCHP grant, I invited *pʰa<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup> sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* to my home in Xining City to record his chants. I telephoned his son (*pʰa<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup> sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* did not use a phone) and explained my plan.<sup>16</sup> A week later, *pʰa<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>*

<sup>15</sup> A project that, in 2013, became the Plateau Cultural Heritage Protection Group (PCHP) and was focused on training university students to record and document endangered traditional music from the Tibetan Plateau. For PCHP's 2012 annual report, see <http://tinyurl.com/qgka67h> (accessed 25 November 2014).

<sup>16</sup> However, in 2013, *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* came to my home in Dashui Village to conduct rituals after my niece (1986-2013) died in Number One Xichang People's Hospital from systemic lupus erythematosus. At this time, he had a cell phone, handed it to me, and asked me to copy some Tibetan songs onto his phone. When he later played and listened to the songs, others around him asked such questions as, "Do you understand those songs?" *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* replied that he did not but said that he enjoyed listening to them.

sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>'s son telephoned me and said that his father had agreed. At that time, there were few requests for his services. During the two months we lived together, we recorded his oral materials, which are extremely valuable as Namuyi ritual knowledge and language source material. sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> understands about forty percent of what he chants, while I understand only about five percent because of the many religious terms and because of my limited knowledge of ritual context.

I present some lines below of an offering chant performed by sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>. At the beginning of every ritual, a *ga<sup>54</sup>ha<sup>54</sup> q<sup>h</sup>vu<sup>33</sup>* 'deity-calling', is chanted. Simultaneously, liquor is poured into a cup, or on the floor or ground (depending on the ritual site) and smoldering incense is offered. I provide both the na<sup>54</sup>mzi<sup>54</sup> k<sup>h</sup>a<sup>21</sup>th<sup>o</sup><sup>21</sup> and English translation.

<sup>1</sup>lo<sup>21</sup> li<sup>21</sup> t<sup>h</sup>o<sup>21</sup> da<sup>21</sup> te<sup>21</sup>  
<sup>2</sup>zæ<sup>21</sup> ji<sup>21</sup> dbu<sup>54</sup> da<sup>33</sup> te<sup>33</sup>  
<sup>3</sup>ji<sup>33</sup> ji<sup>33</sup> ci<sup>54</sup> da<sup>54</sup> te<sup>54</sup>  
<sup>4</sup>la<sup>33</sup> na<sup>33</sup> ji<sup>33</sup> dzə<sup>54</sup> ga<sup>54</sup>ha<sup>54</sup> nu<sup>33</sup>  
<sup>5</sup>p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>21</sup>pbu<sup>21</sup> jo<sup>33</sup> dzə<sup>54</sup> ga<sup>54</sup>ha<sup>54</sup> nu<sup>33</sup>  
<sup>6</sup>ze<sup>21</sup> na<sup>21</sup> ts<sup>h</sup>ə<sup>21</sup> dzə<sup>21</sup> ga<sup>54</sup>ha<sup>54</sup> nu<sup>33</sup>  
<sup>7</sup>t<sup>h</sup>ə<sup>21</sup> na<sup>21</sup> ræ<sup>54</sup> dzə<sup>54</sup> ga<sup>54</sup>ha<sup>54</sup> nu<sup>33</sup>  
<sup>8</sup>ci<sup>54</sup> q<sup>h</sup>vu<sup>54</sup> ti<sup>21</sup> gvu<sup>21</sup> ci<sup>54</sup> za<sup>54</sup> mu<sup>54</sup>  
<sup>9</sup>vi<sup>21</sup> q<sup>h</sup>vu<sup>54</sup> ti<sup>21</sup> gvu<sup>21</sup> vi<sup>21</sup> za<sup>21</sup> mu<sup>21</sup>  
<sup>10</sup>su<sup>33</sup> le<sup>54</sup> ɳa<sup>33</sup> q<sup>h</sup>vu<sup>33</sup> mu<sup>33</sup>  
<sup>11</sup>ɳa<sup>33</sup> le<sup>33</sup> nu<sup>33</sup> q<sup>h</sup>vu<sup>33</sup> mu<sup>33</sup>  
<sup>12</sup>ci<sup>54</sup> q<sup>h</sup>vu<sup>54</sup> ti<sup>21</sup> gvu<sup>21</sup> ci<sup>54</sup> za<sup>54</sup> mu<sup>54</sup>  
<sup>13</sup>vi<sup>21</sup> q<sup>h</sup>vu<sup>54</sup> ti<sup>21</sup> gvu<sup>21</sup> vi<sup>21</sup> za<sup>21</sup> mu<sup>21</sup>

<sup>1</sup>from the upper side<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> "From the upper side" is a polite way of addressing the deities and spirits whom the specialist depends on for the ritual to be efficacious. In a Namuyi home, the most respected people sit on the "upper side" (inner side of the house in relation to the door entrance). More importantly in this specific ritual context, "upper side" is used because mountain deities are believed to

<sup>2</sup>*dbu*<sup>54</sup> from the left side<sup>18</sup>

<sup>3</sup>*ci*<sup>54</sup> from the left side

<sup>4</sup> *ga*<sup>54</sup>*ha*<sup>54</sup> eating tigers and deer

<sup>5</sup>*ga*<sup>54</sup>*ha*<sup>54</sup> eating sheep

<sup>6</sup>*ga*<sup>54</sup>*ha*<sup>54</sup> eating leopards and goats

<sup>7</sup>*ga*<sup>54</sup>*ha*<sup>54</sup> eating eagles and chickens

<sup>8</sup>*ci*<sup>54</sup> descend when I call *ci*<sup>54</sup>

<sup>9</sup>*vi*<sup>21</sup> descend when I call *vi*<sup>21</sup>

<sup>10</sup>others ask for my help<sup>19</sup>

<sup>11</sup>and I ask for your help

<sup>12</sup>*ci*<sup>54</sup> descend when I call *ci*<sup>54</sup>

<sup>13</sup>*vi*<sup>21</sup> descend when I call *vi*<sup>21</sup>

## CHANTS

This section gives ritual names in IPA and the ritual name as it appears on the recordings of the related chants at <http://tinyurl.com/lgf3row>. A brief summary for each ritual is also given.<sup>20</sup>

- *za*<sup>21</sup>*kvu*<sup>33</sup>*pi*<sup>21</sup> *su*<sup>21</sup>, ze kv pi su. A family has few children, an ill child, and/ or an ill mother.
- *jy*<sup>33</sup>*la*<sup>21</sup>*rə*<sup>21</sup>*ko*<sup>21</sup> *su*<sup>21</sup>, yu la re ko su. After building a new home, good wishes are extended and such simple gifts as a cup of liquor are

live in the sky and on high mountain peaks.

<sup>18</sup> A *dbu*<sup>54</sup> is a fist-sized (or smaller) pyramid-shaped stone that naturally has this shape. Such stones are collected from an area that is considered "clean," e.g., a forest where few people go, or upstream where livestock and people rarely go. Each *pʰa*<sup>54</sup>*tsə*<sup>54</sup> and Namuyi family has a *dbu*<sup>54</sup>. A *pʰa*<sup>54</sup>*tsə*<sup>54</sup> brings his *dbu*<sup>54</sup> when he comes to a home to do rituals.

<sup>19</sup> *ci*<sup>54</sup> and *vi*<sup>21</sup> together refer to mountain deities, but may be separated in chants for the sake of poetic beauty.

<sup>20</sup> For the sake of formatting convenience, tinyurls have been used when the original/ effective URL was lengthy. The latter may be located through <http://www.getlinkinfo.com/>, <http://www.knowurl.com/>, or <http://longurl.org/> (all accessed 10 July 2015).

given to the family in the new home by the *p<sup>ha</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>*. Such gifts are blessed by the deities at the location of the new home. The ritual brings health and prosperity to the family living there.

- *bu<sup>33</sup>lu<sup>54</sup>tə<sup>21</sup>su<sup>33</sup>*, wu lu qi su. The spleen and the gall bladder of a pig butchered one or two days before the Chinese Lunar New Year. Some days after the fifteen-day New Year period, a *p<sup>ha</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>* is invited to conduct this ritual. A spleen that curls to the outside is a portent of troubles for the family, as is a gall bladder that is deemed to contain too little liquid. See Libu Lakhi et al. (2009a:39; 2009b:63) for more on this ritual.
- *ts<sup>h</sup>o<sup>21</sup>pi<sup>21</sup> su<sup>21</sup>*, tsho pi su.<sup>21</sup> Held during funeral rituals for parents, especially those who have sons. It is said that if a funeral ritual is conducted for a childless person who committed suicide, the *p<sup>ha</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>* conducting the ritual will have bad luck.
- *tə<sup>54</sup>so<sup>21</sup> su<sup>33</sup>*, tse shuo su. Performed when someone dies from being poisoned (by themselves or by others), through suicide, or through accidents.
- *so<sup>21</sup> su<sup>33</sup>*, shuo su. Performed when a person dreams of bees, which is considered a portent of evil.
- *ə<sup>54</sup>pi<sup>21</sup> su<sup>21</sup>*, she pi su. *ə<sup>54</sup>* refers to disease caused by *mu<sup>54</sup>gvu<sup>54</sup>* 'thunder'. *mu<sup>54</sup>ba<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>21</sup>* refers to lightning. Thunder is understood to resemble an ax with enormous power that passes into the ground when it strikes the earth.<sup>22</sup> When people pass by such places as, for example, a tree that has been struck by lightning, they may become ill, which manifests as painful joints. Such illness may be eradicated by sending it down into the ground or up into the sky. *ə<sup>54</sup>pi<sup>21</sup> su<sup>21</sup>* is chanted during rituals to heal the ill person. *ə<sup>54</sup>pi<sup>21</sup> su<sup>21</sup>* is also chanted when trees produce new leaves in spring, and when tree leaves turn yellow and fall to the ground

<sup>21</sup> *tsho<sup>21</sup>pi<sup>21</sup> su<sup>21</sup>* refers to a funeral ritual shared by both Yi and Namuyi. The origins of this word are unknown.

<sup>22</sup> This belief is reflected in our later usage of the phrase "struck by thunder."

during autumn. The nine *sə<sup>21</sup>* twigs transmit the illness into the ground and the bamboo tree transmits the illness back into the sky. The paper strips used in the ritual are of four colors - white, green, yellow, and blue - which are the colors lightning is thought to display.

- *p<sup>h</sup>i<sup>54</sup>t<sup>21</sup>ca<sup>21</sup>pi<sup>21</sup> su<sup>21</sup>*, phi tca pi su. *fu<sup>21</sup>fu<sup>33</sup>* refers to sickness caused by evil spirits and manifests as dizziness and joint pain. *p<sup>h</sup>i<sup>54</sup>t<sup>21</sup>ca<sup>21</sup>pi<sup>21</sup> su<sup>21</sup>* may be chanted and rituals performed. There are no blood offerings for this ritual. Instead, tofu and a bowl of corn meal are offered. They are usually first cooked because it is believed that the spirits are only able to have the food by smelling the odor, not actually eating the food. This is the only ritual, other than soul-calling, that I am aware of that does not include blood offerings.
- *p<sup>h</sup>e<sup>21</sup>ka<sup>21</sup>p<sup>h</sup>s<sup>21</sup> su<sup>33</sup>*, pe ka pe su. This ritual is generally held under a fruit tree (either wild or cultivated) and is done to request that a child less than two months old become a child of *ci<sup>54</sup>vi<sup>54</sup>*. A fruit tree is chosen because people hope the next generation, which the child symbolizes, will be fruitful and multiply. A name is also given to the child at this time. After the ritual, the child is now one of *ci<sup>54</sup>vi<sup>54</sup>*'s children and safe from the attack of wolves and other wild animals and will experience less illness.
- *mbo<sup>54</sup>k<sup>h</sup>o<sup>54</sup>p<sup>h</sup>bu<sup>21</sup> su<sup>33</sup>*, mbo kho pu su. Performed to protect a family that is the target of bad gossip. Dreams that feature horses are an indication of bad gossip. After a family member has such a dream, a *p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>ts<sup>21</sup>s<sup>21</sup>* is invited to chant.
- *ka<sup>21</sup>jy<sup>21</sup>pi<sup>21</sup> su<sup>21</sup>*, ka yu pi su. Dreams of cats, dogs, and/ or cuddling children are *ka<sup>21</sup>jy<sup>21</sup>* 'ghosts' 'evils' in disguise and may lead to sickness, in which case the *p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>ts<sup>21</sup>s<sup>21</sup>* performs this preventive ritual and chant.
- *dzu<sup>33</sup>mi<sup>21</sup>dzo<sup>33</sup>tso<sup>21</sup> su<sup>33</sup>*, du mi dzo tso su. Performed to ensure that women become pregnant and do not miscarry.

I did not record chants from *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* for the following rituals because he either did not know them or had to leave for his home in Sichuan and lacked the time to recite them.

- *tsə<sup>54</sup>ma<sup>21</sup>pi<sup>21</sup>* is conducted to heal skin diseases using a bucket of dry ash from the hearth.
- *pi<sup>21</sup>dzi<sup>21</sup>ko<sup>21</sup>* is conducted when the master thinks the apprentice is qualified to be a *p<sup>ha</sup>a<sup>54</sup>ts<sup>ə</sup>*. A castrated goat provided by the student's family is killed during the ritual. To show appreciation, the student offers gifts of rice, wheat, buckwheat, and perhaps other grain, cash, and cloth. The fundamental goal of this ritual is to introduce the student to the mountain deities and the *ga<sup>54</sup>ha<sup>54</sup>* of the master *p<sup>ha</sup>a<sup>54</sup>ts<sup>ə</sup>*'s previous teacher so that the new *p<sup>ha</sup>a<sup>54</sup>ts<sup>ə</sup>* will be able to conduct effective rituals. After a week or so, the teacher gives the new *p<sup>ha</sup>a<sup>54</sup>ts<sup>ə</sup>* a drum freshly made from the skin of the goat killed during the *pi<sup>21</sup>dzi<sup>21</sup>ko<sup>21</sup>* ritual. The student is now formally considered a *p<sup>ha</sup>a<sup>54</sup>ts<sup>ə</sup>* and may conduct rituals when invited to do so.

## Personal Account

In March 2013, *p<sup>ha</sup>a<sup>54</sup>ts<sup>ə</sup> sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* sat by our hearth, having just finished the *su<sup>21</sup>li<sup>33</sup>mu<sup>33</sup>* ritual, which is commonly done after a death in the family. In this particular case, it was the death of my niece. During the *su<sup>21</sup>li<sup>33</sup>mu<sup>33</sup>* ritual, which lasted five to six hours, my name and the names of my other family members were called in order to ensure that our souls did not leave with the soul of our niece.

At the end of the *su<sup>21</sup>li<sup>33</sup>mu<sup>33</sup>* ritual, my sister-in-law, *o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>*, said, "Uncle, will you be able to stay one more day and conduct a *sa<sup>54</sup>pi<sup>21</sup> su<sup>21</sup>* ritual for me?"

"Yeah, but do you think your Uncle has time to stay?" inserted Mother before *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* responded.

"Yes, it depends on your uncle. He must be tired with these troublesome rituals," Father added.

"It's OK. I can stay and do the ritual and then leave," *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* agreed.

"Thank you, Uncle! This ritual was done for me about ten

years ago, and I was well, but now I feel my body joints are painful. I'm so glad that you can do this ritual for me," o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup> said.<sup>23</sup>

The *ʂə<sup>54</sup>pi<sup>21</sup>su<sup>21</sup>* ritual that ensued is outlined below:

- o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup> asked for buckwheat flour and buckwheat grain from a Nuosu family<sup>24</sup>
- o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup> cooked buckwheat till it popped and prepared items for the ritual
- ʂa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> conducted the "egg cracking" ritual
- o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup> served breakfast
- the four participants reached the ritual site
- o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup> fetched water from a stream
- va<sup>54</sup>tʂa<sup>33</sup> cut branches from nearby trees<sup>25</sup>
- ʂa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> and I prepared nine bunches of tree twigs
- I made the smoke fire, and ʂa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> started chanting, ʂa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> instructed me where to insert the twigs, and va<sup>54</sup>tʂa<sup>33</sup> made another fire for heating water and cooking the rooster
- ʂa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> demonstrated how to fold and cut the ritual papers while chanting
- o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup> and I folded and cut the papers, ʂa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> kneaded dough from buckwheat flour and made *tBu<sup>33</sup>hə<sup>33</sup>ma<sup>33</sup>* 'dough effigies', and va<sup>54</sup>tʂa<sup>33</sup> made a forked tree stick from which to hang the pot<sup>26</sup>
- ʂa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> chanted and tied a bamboo pole and tree branches to the tree trunk under which the main part of the ritual was conducted

<sup>23</sup> Father told me that he had had joint pain every year, but did not want to do rituals to alleviate the pain. He said that his joint pain gradually lessened and he believed that if he did rituals to remedy the pain, then the only way in the future to treat the pain was to do more rituals.

<sup>24</sup> Although both Nuosu and Namuyi families have grown buckwheat since the time of my earliest childhood, my family did not have any buckwheat at the time of this ritual, hence the need to borrow some.

<sup>25</sup> va<sup>54</sup>tʂa<sup>33</sup> is one of my older brothers.

<sup>26</sup> *Gtor ma*.

- ḥa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> chanted and o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup> and I tied strings with bunches of ritual paper to nearby trees to mark the four directions
- ḥa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> chanted as va<sup>54</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup> made a fire and boiled water
- ḥa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> chanted while va<sup>54</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup> killed the rooster
- ḥa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> chanted while making an offering of rooster blood and va<sup>54</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup> blew his pæ<sup>21</sup>hæ<sup>33</sup> 'wood horn'
- ḥa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> chanted; va<sup>54</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup> put the rooster over the fire; burned the feathers away; washed the rooster; cut the rooster open; removed the internal organs; cut away one leg and one wing; and then put one leg, one wing, and the liver in the hot coals. The remaining rooster (except for the head and neck, which remained connected) was chopped and put in a pot to boil.
- ḥa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> chanted and offered a rooster leg, wing, and liver
- ḥa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> chanted, beat the *dzu*<sup>33</sup>*dzu*<sup>33</sup> 'drum', and made *tBU*<sup>21</sup> pæ<sup>21</sup>pæ<sup>33</sup> 'gtor ma-like cones' (cone-shaped, ritual food offerings)
- ḥa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> chanted, beat the drum, and shook the *tsʰə*<sup>33</sup>*lu*<sup>33</sup> 'round piece of metal with an attached striker' as va<sup>54</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup> boiled the rooster
- ḥa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> chanted and offered the boiled rooster head; va<sup>54</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup> blew the wooden horn
- ḥa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> chanted, sending away mountain deities while va<sup>54</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup> prepared a meal
- for about twenty minutes we rested and had rice, chicken, and chicken soup
- ḥa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> chanted, I rekindled the smoke fire and va<sup>54</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup> collected the items brought from his home
- ḥa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> chanted, o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup> jumped over the fire and ran back to her home, and va<sup>54</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup> blew the wood horn
- ḥa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> stopped chanting
- ḥa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>, va<sup>54</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup>, and I carried what had been brought and departed for va<sup>54</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup>'s home

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The next morning, *va<sup>54</sup>tsha<sup>33</sup>* went to Minsheng Township Town on his motorcycle with ten RMB that *o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>* had given him to buy paper needed for the ritual.

Birds chirped vigorously from tree branches, stimulated by warmth from the sun, which generously spread into the valley where my second brother's adobe home is located. Some birds hovered above the house and then darted back into bamboo clusters behind the house as though they were not getting enough sunshine. The smell of boiling *la<sup>21</sup>zu<sup>33</sup>* 'smoked and dried pork' excited chickens and dogs scavenging around in the family yard. *o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>* brought a bowl of clean water and an egg to *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* where he was sitting in the sunny courtyard near the main room door, and then loudly shooed away the chickens and dogs.

"These chickens and dogs are really annoying. Uncle, please crack an egg<sup>27</sup> for me before we have breakfast," *o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>* said.

"Why do we need to do *ræ<sup>33</sup>bu<sup>54</sup> phu<sup>21</sup>* 'cracking egg', since we already knew what kind of illness you have and what ritual to do?" I asked *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>*. I thought *ræ<sup>33</sup>bu<sup>54</sup> phu<sup>21</sup>* was going to diagnose illness and determine the appropriate ritual to conduct by cracking an egg into a bowl of water and examining the egg.

"But it is still very useful to do this, because at least some of the pain can be passed to the egg," he replied.

"Oh! I didn't know the egg could do that!" I said in surprise.

"*o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>*, did you rub the egg on your body?" *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* asked.

"Oh, no. I forgot. I also forgot to pierce the shell," she replied. She then took the egg, made a hole in the big end with a needle, and rubbed the egg on her waist and leg joints where

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<sup>27</sup> Egg cracking is a customary ritual shared by both Nuosu and Namuyi in Dashui Village.

there was pain.

"Yes, rub it and especially rub it more times on the places that you feel are very painful. Then breathe seven times on the hole in the egg," ṣa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> said. He turned to Guifeng (o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>'s son; b. 2001) and said, "Bring some fu<sup>21</sup>na<sup>54</sup>, from a clean area."<sup>28</sup>

Guifeng returned after about five minutes with a bunch of fu<sup>21</sup>na<sup>54</sup>. Holding the egg wrapped in fu<sup>21</sup>na<sup>54</sup> in his right hand, ṣa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> began chanting. After about five minutes, he cracked the egg on the edge of the bowl, which was half-full of water, and poured the egg into the bowl of water.

While examining the egg in the bowl, he said, "Yes, you must feel much pain at times. Your soul is with you, so no problem there. You should also feel a little bit better now that I cracked the egg." He stirred the egg in the water, turning the water yellowish. ṣa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> made a circle counterclockwise over o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>'s head while chanting and then he handed the bowl to Guifeng, who emptied it outside the courtyard.

o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup> served a meal of rice, boiled pork, homemade vu<sup>33</sup>dzo<sup>33</sup> ko<sup>21</sup>ko<sup>21</sup> 'smoked sausage', and pickled bo<sup>21</sup>ly<sup>54</sup> 'turnip' soup.<sup>29</sup> va<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>33</sup> returned after purchasing the red, green, white, and yellow papers that were needed for the ritual.<sup>30</sup>

o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup> said to Guifeng and her three other children, "Guifeng, you and the others clean up the dishes. We're leaving. It's getting late."

"Be sure you stay at home and take care of our horses.

<sup>28</sup> The fu<sup>21</sup>na<sup>54</sup> plant generally grows about one meter tall, but may be as much as two meters tall. This plant is also used to make torches during təɔ<sup>33</sup> 'the Torch Festival' held on the twenty-fourth day of the seventh lunar month. "Clean" refers to an area where people and livestock rarely go, such as the side of a steep cliff. An objective of this festival, which is held at the same time as the local Nuosu festival, is to protect crops from insects. See Meng (2012) for more on this festival.

<sup>29</sup> bo<sup>21</sup> tcy<sup>54</sup> ræ<sup>21</sup> = soup made from pickled turnip tops with salt and cut-up potatoes added. bo<sup>21</sup> tcy<sup>54</sup> = pickled turnip tops.

<sup>30</sup> There is no specific term for these papers in na<sup>54</sup>mzi<sup>54</sup> k<sup>ha</sup><sup>21</sup>th<sup>o</sup><sup>21</sup>.

Don't let them get into the wheat fields," *va<sup>54</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup>* added.

We set off to the ritual site, north of *va<sup>54</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup>*'s home on a small flat area on a mountain slope by a stream. It was about a forty-minute walk. *o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>* carried a *kha<sup>21</sup>* 'bamboo back basket' containing a pot, knife, big plastic bottle, a white rooster, buckwheat flour, popped buckwheat, and some other items that she had prepared earlier. She walked quickly and soon disappeared. *ṣa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* followed with his bag holding his ritual implements, *va<sup>54</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup>* came next, puffing on a cigarette, and I brought up the rear.<sup>31</sup>

As we passed a bamboo grove near *va<sup>54</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup>*'s house, *ṣa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* pointed to a bamboo that was about three meters tall, and said, "Cut this. We need it for the ritual." *va<sup>54</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup>* cut it and pulled it behind him as we made our way up the slope.

*o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>* was waiting for us when the three of us reached the ritual site. She had filled the big plastic bottle with clean water from a stream that was about a five-minute walk away.

"I made a little pool by the stream. The stream is clogged with tree leaves and branches. It's impossible to get any water without making a pool. Next time, you fetch water when we use up what's in this bottle," *o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>* said to her husband.

"No, you should do more exercise. That way, you will recover more quickly," *va<sup>54</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup>* replied, lying on the ground in the shade under a tree.

*ṣa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* and I laughed.

"*va<sup>54</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup>*, *va<sup>54</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup>*! Move! Otherwise, we'll have difficulty seeing in the darkness tonight," *ṣa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* urged.

I helped *ṣa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* cut green branches from *ndṣa<sup>33</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>* and *ṣe<sup>21</sup>* trees and sharpened the ends of some twigs. I collected some dry bushes, set them on fire, and covered the fire with *ndṣa<sup>33</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>* branches to make smoke. Meanwhile, *ṣa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* sat

<sup>31</sup> *ṣa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>*'s ritual implements included a drum, *pæ<sup>21</sup>hæ<sup>33</sup>* 'wood horn', and a *tsʰə<sup>33</sup>lu<sup>33</sup>* 'round piece of metal with an attached striker'. During the ritual he also wore a *čə<sup>21</sup>po<sup>33</sup>rə<sup>54</sup>dza<sup>54</sup>* 'hat with five sections' (see Figure 2).

under the shade of a tree about five meters west of the smoke fire. About three meters to the north of where *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* sat, *va<sup>54</sup>ts<sup>ə</sup>a<sup>33</sup>* was busy making a fire. He put two forked sticks on either side of the fire and a tree branch atop the sticks from which to hang a kettle and, later, to boil the rooster.

After I made the fire produce smoke, *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* stood and began chanting, while using a trowel to dig one time at each of nine locations. The distance between the nine holes was about fifty centimeters. I inserted three twigs into each hole as *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* instructed.

After inserting the twigs, *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* continued chanting while mixing buckwheat flour with cold water in a bowl. He kneaded the dough and made cones that he placed on a rock under the tree where he was chanting.

"*va<sup>54</sup>ts<sup>ə</sup>a<sup>33</sup>*, this stone won't do - it keeps rolling away. Go find another, flatter one that I can put the *t<sup>bu</sup><sup>21</sup> p<sup>æ</sup><sup>21</sup>p<sup>æ</sup><sup>33</sup>* on," *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* said.

"I'm busy making the fire," *va<sup>54</sup>ts<sup>ə</sup>a<sup>33</sup>* replied.

I searched, found a flat stone, and brought it to *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>*.

Meanwhile, *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* was busy using lengths of the wild *na<sup>21</sup>mbo<sup>33</sup>* plant to tie the ritual bamboo to the tree under which he would chant.<sup>32</sup> He also tied *se<sup>21</sup>* branches to the same tree. Next, he demonstrated how to cut the papers into narrow strips about one meter long. Four strips, with each strip being of a different color (red, white, yellow, and green), were then placed into one bunch. Seven to ten strips were then put on each of five strings.<sup>33</sup> Each strip was about five meters long. *o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>* also wore one string wrapped around her head. The other four strings were tied to trees to mark the four directions.

During the ritual, *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* chanted, beat his drum, and occasionally sipped beer from a bottle while offering fresh liquor

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<sup>32</sup> It is a wild plant that may be used like string.

<sup>33</sup> The number of bunches of paper strips depends on the distance between the two trees the string is tied to.

to his *ga<sup>54</sup>ha<sup>54</sup>*. After finishing each of the ten to fifteen chants, *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* blew his wood horn and instructed *va<sup>54</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup>* to make one circle over *o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>*'s head with popped buckwheat while saying, "*ti<sup>21</sup> tco<sup>33</sup> na<sup>21</sup>tco<sup>21</sup> q<sup>h</sup>fu<sup>21</sup> tco<sup>21</sup> sθ<sup>21</sup> tco<sup>21</sup>* One [first] circle, five [fifth] circle, six [sixth] circle, seven [seventh] circle," and then tossing the buckwheat into the fire.<sup>34</sup>

*la<sup>21</sup> pi<sup>21</sup>za<sup>21</sup>* 'deity chanting' was performed at each point of *hū<sup>21</sup> phu<sup>54</sup>* 'ritual offering of rooster feathers' (before the rooster was killed), *sε<sup>21</sup>phu<sup>54</sup>* 'ritual offering of blood', *vu<sup>21</sup>sθ<sup>54</sup>* 'ritual offering of roasted meat', and *tca<sup>21</sup>sθ<sup>54</sup>* ('ritual offering of cooked meat' and in this case, the boiled rooster neck with the head attached), accompanied by burning rooster feathers and blowing the wood horn three times.

After offering the boiled rooster head, the string of paper worn by *o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>* was removed and put on the bamboo branch.

The ritual ended with *o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>* leaving the ritual site. Next, we all jumped over the smoke fire made of dry bushes with fresh *ndža<sup>33</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>* branches on top to generate more smoke. We extinguished the smoke fire, picked up what we had brought, and left immediately. While leaving, we each said, naming a different animal, "I'm going to X's home to bring an animal (cow, pig, sheep) to slaughter here." We could hardly see the path back in the inky darkness.

*o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>* was back at her home when the rest of us arrived. "You must be very tired, Uncle! Rest and have some beer," *o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>* said, offering *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* a bottle of beer.

"I'm fine. Make sure you stay at home for at least one day, and avoid green tree leaves and strangers," *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* reminded, while sipping from the bottle of beer.

"Sure. We're busy building a new house. If we weren't so busy, I'd stay inside for three days. I know I must stay inside for

<sup>34</sup> *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>* thought that blowing the wood horn required considerable energy. To save his strength, he asked *va<sup>54</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup>*, who has the required skill, to blow the horn.

at least one day, otherwise the ritual will be useless," she said.

•••

On 4 April 2013 while I was working on this paper, I decided to phone o<sup>54</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup> to obtain more information about her condition before the ritual and to see how she was feeling since. I summarize what she told me:

The first time the ritual was done for me, I was pregnant with my first child at my parents' home. I cannot remember exactly, but it was about ten years ago. At that time, I had basically become deaf. I could not hear what others said unless they shouted. Also, all my joints were painful. I felt exhausted and I didn't feel like doing any physical labor. Villagers said that the ritual had to be done to cure these problems. A white chicken was required for the ritual but we couldn't find such a chicken, so we did the ritual with a chicken that had a few white feathers.

I recovered after the ritual and I was fine until early this year. Then I felt that all my joints were painful and I was unable to speak normally – I could only speak in a low voice.

When Uncle ṣa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> was here, I asked him to do the ritual for me. This time, we bought a completely white rooster from a Nuosu family.<sup>35</sup>

People say we should not go near trees or places struck by thunder, otherwise, we'll get sick. I guess I unknowingly went near such a site and probably also collected dry branches from trees that had been struck by thunder. I often collect firewood and dry leaves. We usually don't know if the wood we collect from dead, dry trees is wood from trees that died from being struck by thunder. I think I also mistakenly collected wood from such trees.

After the ritual earlier this year [2013], I stayed inside the house for one day, which is what Uncle ṣa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> told me to do. I

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<sup>35</sup> The rooster weighed 1.25 kilos and cost seventy RMB.

only went outside that night when it was completely dark. Three days after the ritual, my voice returned to normal. Now [14 April 2013], I am completely back to normal.

## CONCLUSION

This paper provides a general sense of Namuyi Tibetan religion based on my experiences of working with the religious specialist, *sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup>*. Within the context of the major types of religious activity that I briefly describe, an account of a more specific *sə<sup>54</sup>pi<sup>21</sup> su<sup>21</sup>* ritual is described in greater detail.

Father, as noted earlier, suggests a distinction between Namuyi Tibetan and Nuosu religions. This distinction needs sharpening in future research, as do the connections between Namuyi religion and Tibetan Buddhism, given the historical presence of *a<sup>54</sup>sə<sup>54</sup>* who conducted rituals by reading Tibetan scriptures and terms employed to refer to various numina. Finally, Namuyi religious activities are diverse, e.g., a ritual to solve a problem such as illness may be performed differently from one Namuyi area to another. This emphasizes the importance of conducting in-depth local studies of disparate Namuyi Tibetan communities before attempting generalizations about Namuyi religion.

FIGURES<sup>36</sup>

Figure 1. p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup> sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> in Dashui Village in 2013.



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<sup>36</sup> All photographs were taken by the author.

Figure 2. *p<sup>ha</sup>ts<sup>ø</sup>sa<sup>da</sup>* in Dashui Village in 2013 with *o<sup>ndzo</sup>mi* (b. 1981), a Dashui villager and my sister-in-law. The latter was the focus of a *so<sup>pi</sup>su* ritual and chanting performed by *p<sup>ha</sup>ts<sup>ø</sup>sa<sup>da</sup>* on a mountain slope near Dashui Village. *o<sup>ndzo</sup>mi* had suffered from general joint pain for several months. Two days after the ritual, *o<sup>ndzo</sup>mi* said that she felt well again. *o<sup>ndzo</sup>mi* wore one of five strings of ritual paper around her head.



Figure 3. A fire made to boil water and cook a rooster during the ritual. Ritual paper is strung between small trees.



Figure 4. Diagram of the *sə<sup>54</sup>pi<sup>21</sup> su<sup>21</sup>* ritual site. During the ritual, the *pʰa<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>* sat in the circle under the tree (sketch by Libu Lakhi).



Figure 5. *pæ<sup>21</sup>hæ<sup>33</sup>* 'wood horn' used during the ritual. Figures 5, 6, and 7 were taken in 2000 in my family yard. Villager Qijin (b. 1973) owns these religious implements, which he inherited from his father (ga<sup>21</sup>mo<sup>54</sup>, 1946-2006) who wished him to become a *p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>*. In fact, Qijin did not become a *p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>*. He had refused to do so because he was too timid to chant in front of others. I asked him to bring these implements to my home so that I could photograph them.



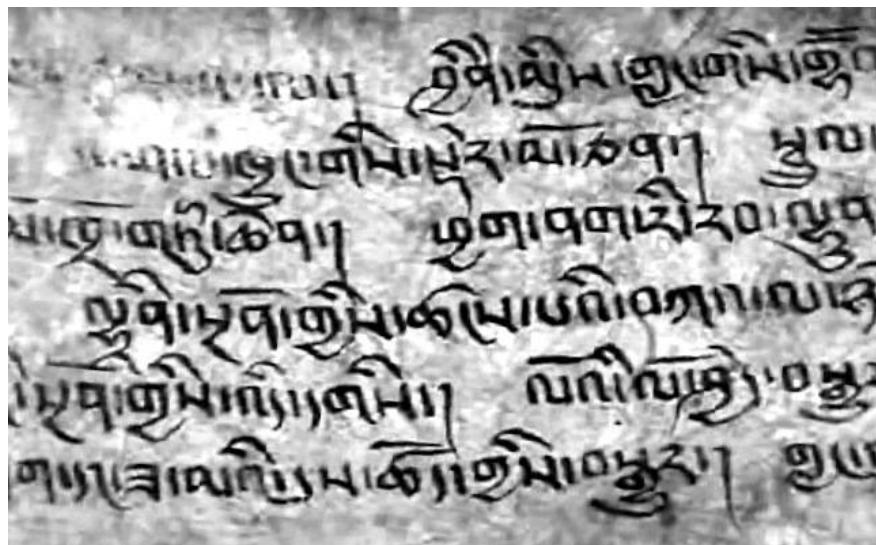
Figure 6. *tsʰə<sup>33</sup>lu<sup>33</sup>*, a cymbal with an attached striker that was used during the *mbo<sup>54</sup> kʰo<sup>54</sup> pbu<sup>21</sup>* ritual.



Figure 7. *a<sup>54</sup>ṣə<sup>54</sup>thə<sup>21</sup>ræ<sup>21</sup>*, scripture in Tibetan owned by Qijin.



Figure 8. a<sup>54</sup>sə<sup>54</sup> t<sup>h</sup>a<sup>21</sup>ræ<sup>21</sup>, scripture in Tibetan owned by Qijin.



APPENDIX: P<sup>H</sup>A<sup>54</sup>TSΘ<sup>54</sup> SA<sup>54</sup>DA<sup>54</sup> CHANTS: FILE NAMES, DURATION, AND SIZE

File Name	Ritual Name	Duration	Size MB
dzu mi dzo tso su 01	<i>dzu<sup>33</sup>mi<sup>21</sup>dzo<sup>33</sup>tso<sup>21</sup>su<sup>33</sup></i>	0'59"	10.0
dzu mi dzo tso su 02	- ensures women	4'29"	45.3
dzu mi dzo tso su 03	become pregnant and	1'57"	19.8
dzu mi dzo tso su 04	do not miscarry.	5'35"	70.5
dzu mi dzo tso su 05		8'01"	81.0
dzu mi dzo tso su 06		8'27"	85.4
dzu mi dzo tso su 07		16'18"	164.5
dzu mi dzo tso su 08		7'28"	75.5
dzu mi dzo tso su 09		7'06"	72.6
dzu mi dzo tso su 10		4'48"	48.5
dzu mi dzo tso su 11		8'35"	86.7
dzu mi dzo tso su 12		8'15"	83.4
dzu mi dzo tso su 13		9'53"	99.9
dzu mi dzo tso su 14		5'37"	56.8
dzu mi dzo tso su 15		6'50"	69.1
dzu mi dzo tso su 16		5'06"	51.6
dzu mi dzo tso su 17		5'19"	53.8
dzu mi dzo tso su 18		6'55"	69.9
dzu mi dzo tso su 19		7'39"	76.9
dzu mi dzo tso su 20		56'23"	569.2
dzu mi dzo tso su 21		24'17"	245.3
dzu mi dzo tso su 22		3'46	38.1
dzu mi dzo tso su 23		3'29"	35.2
dzu mi dzo tso su 24		9'49	101.1
dzu mi dzo tso su 25		18'10"	183.5
ka yu pi su 01	<i>ka<sup>21</sup>jy<sup>21</sup>pi<sup>21</sup>su<sup>21</sup></i> -	4'00"	40.5
ka yu pi su 02	dreams of cats, dogs,	1'38"	16.5
ka yu pi su 03	and/ or cuddling	3'39"	36.9

ka yu pi su 04	children are <i>ka<sup>2</sup>jy<sup>21</sup></i>	5'35"	56.4
ka yu pi su 05	'ghosts' 'evils' in	6'37"	67.8
ka yu pi su 06	disguise and may lead	8'24"	84.9
ka yu pi su 07	to sickness, in which	9'00"	90.9
ka yu pi su 08	case the <i>p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>5</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup></i>	4'51"	49.0
ka yu pi su 09	performs this	3'06"	31.5
ka yu pi su 10	preventive ritual and	10'17"	103.8
ka yu pi su 11	chant.	18'57"	191.4
ka yu pi su 12		12'12"	123.1
ka yu pi su 13		21'02"	212.0
ka yu pi su 14		25'29"	257.3
ka yu pi su 15		9'13"	93.0
ka yu pi su 16		25'56"	261.8
ka yu pi su 17		14'48"	149.5
ka yu pi su 18		8'17"	83.7
ka yu pi su 19		2'23"	24.1
ka yu pi su 20		7'58"	80.5
ka yu pi su 21		9'28"	95.6
ka yu pi su 22		9'17"	93.7
ka yu pi su 23		7'31"	76.0
ka yu pi su 24		24'38"	248.7
ka yu pi su 25		12'12"	123.2
ka yu pi su 26		20'00"	202.0
mbo kho pu su 01	<i>mbo<sup>54</sup>k<sup>h</sup>o<sup>54</sup> p<sup>h</sup>bu<sup>21</sup> su<sup>33</sup></i> -	5'31"	55.8
mbo kho pu su 02	performed to protect a	2'36"	26.4
mbo kho pu su 03	family that is the	4'17"	43.3
mbo kho pu su 04	target of bad gossip.	4'30"	45.5
mbo kho pu su 05	Dreams that feature	7'37"	77.0
mbo kho pu su 06	horses are an	6'55"	69.9
mbo kho pu su 07	indication of bad	8'30"	85.9
mbo kho pu su 08	gossip. After a family	1'41"	17.0
mbo kho pu su 09	member has such a	4'24"	44.6
	dream, a <i>p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup></i> is		
	invited to chant.		

mbo kho pu su 10		3'40"	37.2
mbo kho pu su 11		5'51"	59.2
mbo kho pu su 12		5'32"	56.4
mbo kho pu su 13		5'32"	55.9
mbo kho pu su 14		3'02"	30.8
mbo kho pu su 15		7'40"	77.5
mbo kho pu su 16		2'14"	22.6
pe ka pe su 01	<i>pje<sup>21</sup>ka<sup>21</sup>p<sup>h</sup>ṣə<sup>54</sup> su<sup>33</sup></i> - performed under a fruit tree. Requests that a child less than two months old become a child of <i>ci<sup>54</sup>vi<sup>54</sup></i> . The child is also given a name, is now one of <i>ci<sup>54</sup>vi<sup>54</sup></i> 's children, and thus safe from wolves and other wild animals. The child will also experience less illness.	4'40"	47.3
pe ka pe su 02		3'09"	31.8
pe ka pe su 03		3'40"	37.2
pe ka pe su 04		2'23"	24.1
pe ka pe su 05		7'07"	72.0
pe ka pe su 06		7'09"	72.3
pe ka pe su 07		6'29"	65.5
pe ka pe su 08		3'16"	33.0
pe ka pe su 09		5'36"	56.6
pe ka pe su 10		5'49"	58.8
pe ka pe su 11		6'11"	62.6
pe ka pe su 12		28'53"	291.5
pe ka pe su 13		8'54"	90.3
phi tca pi su 01	<i>p<sup>hi</sup><sup>54</sup>t<sup>ca</sup><sup>21</sup>pi<sup>21</sup>su<sup>21</sup></i>	14'18"	144.4
phi tca pi su 02	<i>fu<sup>21</sup>fu<sup>33</sup></i> - held to resolve illness caused by evil spirits. Manifests as dizziness and joint pain. There are no blood offerings.	4'03"	40.9
phi tca pi su 03		2'59"	30.3
phi tca pi su 04		2'07"	21.4
phi tca pi su 05		10'04"	103.4
phi tca pi su 06	Instead, tofu and a bowl of corn meal are offered. They are usually cooked first because it is believed that the spirits are only able to have the food by smelling the odor, not actually	11'37"	117.3
phi tca pi su 07		5'22"	54.2
phi tca pi su 08		9'12"	92.9
phi tca pi su 09		9'56"	100.3
phi tca pi su 10		6'11"	62.6
phi tca pi su 11		10'00"	101.1
phi tca pi su 12		9'46"	98.7
phi tca pi su 13		14'04"	142.0

phi tca pi su 14	eating the food. This and soul-calling are the only rituals that I am aware of that do not involve blood offerings.	12'50"	130.7
phi tca pi su 15		11'28"	115.8
phi tca pi su 16		24'11"	244.2
phi tca pi su 17		21'50"	220.4
phi tca pi su 18		23'11"	234.0
phi tca pi su 19		24'26"	246.7
phi tca pi su 20		4'27"	45.0
phi tca pi su 21		10'39"	107.5
phi tca pi su 22		11'18"	114.1
phi tca pi su 23		18'12"	183.7
phi tca pi su 24		4'21"	43.9
she pi su 01	<i>sə<sup>54</sup>pi<sup>21</sup>su<sup>21</sup></i> - ritual to treat disease (such as painful joints) caused by <i>mu<sup>54</sup>gvu<sup>54</sup></i> 'thunder'. Such illness may be eradicated by sending the thunder down into the ground or up into the sky. <i>sə<sup>54</sup>pi<sup>21</sup>su<sup>21</sup></i> is chanted to heal the ill person. <i>sə<sup>54</sup>pi<sup>21</sup>su<sup>21</sup></i> is also done when trees produce new leaves in spring, and when tree leaves turn yellow and fall during autumn.	9'19"	94.1
she pi su 02		2'17"	23.0
she pi su 03		6'08"	62.0
she pi su 04		2'05"	21.1
she pi su 05		8'48"	88.9
she pi su 06		9'14"	93.3
she pi su 07		15'55"	159.9
she pi su 08		21'44"	219.5
she pi su 09		15'00"	151.5
she pi su 10		22'39"	228.7
she pi su 11		8'55"	90.1
she pi su 12		15'47"	159.4
she pi su 13		17'59"	181.6
she pi su 14		13'14"	133.6
she pi su 15		3'14"	32.7
shuo su 01	<i>t<sub>ə</sub>sə<sup>54</sup>so<sup>21</sup>su<sup>33</sup></i> - performed when someone dies from being poisoned (by themselves or by others), suicide, and in accidents.	7'30"	75.8
shuo su 02		6'17"	63.5
shuo su 03		9'34"	96.9
shuo su 04		9'47"	98.8
shuo su 05		5'53"	59.5
shuo su 06		3'33"	25.9

shuo su 07		6'09"	62.2
shuo su 08		5'57"	60.2
shuo su 09		7'18"	73.7
shuo su 10		10'23"	105.0
shuo su 11		7'15"	73.3
shuo su 12		5'00"	50.5
shuo su 13		6'41"	67.6
shuo su 14		5'21"	54.1
shuo su 15		6'57"	70.2
shuo su 16		5'09"	52.0
shuo su 17		7'22"	74.5
shuo su 18		5'59"	60.6
shuo su 19		3'32"	35.7
shuo su 20		3'12"	32.5
shuo su 21		8'26"	85.2
shuo su 22		10'14"	103.7
tse sho su 01	<i>tsə<sup>54</sup>ʂo<sup>21</sup>su<sup>33</sup></i> - ritual held and chanted	4'58"	50.2
tse sho su 02	when someone dies	1'42"	17.3
tse sho su 03	from being poisoned	7'37"	77.0
tse sho su 04	(by themselves or by others), suicide, and in accidents	9'16"	93.7
tse sho su 05		11'24"	115.2
tse sho su 06		6'42"	67.7
tse sho su 07		5'30"	55.5
tse sho su 08		2'11"	22.2
tse sho su 09		1'19"	13.3
tse sho su 10		17'07"	172.8
tse sho su 11		28'44"	290.1
tse sho su 12		31'43"	320.3
tse sho su 13		47'01"	476.0
tsho pi su 01	<i>tsʰo<sup>21</sup>pi<sup>21</sup>su<sup>21</sup></i> - performed during	13'24"	135.4
tsho pi su 02	funeral rituals for	2'34"	25.9
tsho pi su 03	parents, especially	3'09"	31.9
tsho pi su 04		5'00"	50.5

tsho pi su 05	those who have sons.	9'47"	98.8
tsho pi su 06	If a funeral ritual is conducted for a childless person who	8'47"	88.7
tsho pi su 07	committed suicide, the	8'13"	83.0
tsho pi su 08	<i>p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup></i> conducting	13'41"	272.9
tsho pi su 09	the ritual will have bad luck.	2'43"	27.5
tsho pi su 10		13'15"	133.8
tsho pi su 11		26'01"	262.6
tsho pi su 12		4'15"	42.9
tsho pi su 13		24'47"	250.3
tsho pi su 14		8'01"	81.0
tsho pi su 15		4'22"	44.1
tsho pi su 16		9'43"	98.2
tsho pi su 17		31'43"	320.3
tsho pi su 18		34'18"	476.0
wu lu qi su 01	<i>bu<sup>33</sup>lu<sup>54</sup>tɕʰə<sup>21</sup>su<sup>33</sup></i> - ritual held involving	1'22"	13.9
wu lu qi su 02	the spleen and the gall	3'28"	35.0
wu lu qi su 03	bladder of a pig	3'12"	22.3
wu lu qi su 04	butchered one or two	3'09"	31.9
wu lu qi su 05	days before the	3'35"	36.3
wu lu qi su 06	Chinese Lunar New	7'38"	77.2
wu lu qi su 07	Year. Some days after	8'37"	87.1
wu lu qi su 08	the fifteen-day New	6'01"	60.9
wu lu qi su 09	Year period, a	5'44"	58.0
wu lu qi su 10	<i>p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup></i> is invited to	3'01"	30.5
wu lu qi su 11	conduct this ritual and	7'35"	76.7
wu lu qi su 12	examine the organs. A	6'27"	65.1
wu lu qi su 13	spleen that curls to the	25'18"	67.7
wu lu qi su 14	outside is a portent of	11'32"	116.5
wu lu qi su 15	troubles for the family,	16'40"	168.3
wu lu qi su 16	as is a gall bladder that	7'05"	71.5
wu lu qi su 17	is deemed to contain	12'35"	125.4
wu lu qi su 18	too little liquid. See	4'22"	44.2
	Libu Lakhi (2009a:39; 2009b:63) for more		
	on this ritual.		

wu lu qi su 19		8'50"	89.3
wu lu qi su 20		18'40"	188.5
wu lu qi su 21		7'25"	74.9
wu lu qi su 22		9'47"	98.8
wu lu qi su 23		10'50"	110.8
wu lu qi su 24		2'46"	28.1
wu lu qi su 25		8'24"	84.8
wu lu qi su 26		4'02"	40.8
wu lu qi su 27		10'41"	107.9
yu la re ko su 01	<i>jy<sup>33</sup>la<sup>21</sup>rɔ<sup>21</sup>ko<sup>21</sup>su<sup>21</sup></i> - ritual held after	3'59"	40.3
yu la re ko su 02	building a new home.	4'01"	40.5
yu la re ko su 03	Good wishes are	1'27"	14.8
yu la re ko su 04	extended and the	2'54"	29.3
yu la re ko su 05	<i>pʰa<sup>54</sup>tsɔ<sup>54</sup></i> gives such	3'22"	34.1
yu la re ko su 06	simple gifts as a cup of	7'37"	77.0
yu la re ko su 07	liquor to the family.	9'04"	91.6
yu la re ko su 08	These gifts are blessed	7'01"	70.9
yu la re ko su 09	by the deities at the	1'52"	19.0
yu la re ko su 10	location of the new	7'00"	70.8
yu la re ko su 11	home and bring health	7'09"	72.3
yu la re ko su 12	and prosperity to the	4'21"	44.0
yu la re ko su 13	family.		
ze kv pi su 01	<i>zə<sup>21</sup>kvu<sup>33</sup>pi<sup>21</sup>su<sup>21</sup></i> - a	5'29"	55.4
ze kv pi su 02	ritual held when a	2'03"	20.8
ze kv pi su 03	family has few	9'27"	94.4
ze kv pi su 04	children, an ill child,	8'31"	86.0
ze kv pi su 05	and/ or an ill mother.	8'15"	83.4
ze kv pi su 06		12'46'	129.0
ze kv pi su 07		9'22"	94.6
ze kv pi su 08		5'12"	52.7
ze kv pi su 09		7'25"	74.9
ze kv pi su 10		9'29"	95.8
ze kv pi su 11		8'33"	86.4
ze kv pi su 12		18'35"	194.9

ze kv pi su 13	13'04"	132.0
ze kv pi su 14	21'46"	219.7
ze kv pi su 15	20'00"	202.0
ze kv pi su 16	22'26"	226.5
ze kv pi su 17	3'22"	34.1
ze kv pi su 18	11'59"	121.0
ze kv pi su 19	8'46"	88.5
ze kv pi su 20	2'42"	27.3
ze kv pi su 21	8'43"	86.5
ze kv pi su 22	7'20"	74.1
ze kv pi su 23	5'54"	59.7
ze kv pi su 24	6'24"	64.6
ze kv pi su 25	38'46"	391.4
ze kv pi su 26	9'46"	98.7
ze kv pi su 27	6'01"	60.8
ze kv pi su 28	8'37"	87.1
ze kv pi su 29	8'55"	90.1
ze kv pi su 30	9'34"	96.7
ze kv pi su 31	9'40"	97.7

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NON-ENGLISH TERMS

A

a<sup>54</sup>ʂə<sup>33</sup>, traditional Namuyi religious practitioner who reads Tibetan-language texts while conducting religious rituals

a<sup>54</sup>ʂə<sup>33</sup> tʰa<sup>21</sup>ræ<sup>21</sup>, scripture used by a<sup>54</sup>ʂə<sup>33</sup> while conducting religious rituals

Amdo 阿坝藏族羌族自治州, one of three major Tibetan regions

B

bimo 毕摩, Nuosu ritual specialist

C

ɕi<sup>54</sup>vi<sup>54</sup>, mountain deities

ɕə<sup>21</sup>po<sup>33</sup>rə<sup>54</sup>dza<sup>54</sup>, a religious hat with five sections

D

Dashui 大水 Village

dbu<sup>54</sup>, triangular stone, mountain deities

Deng Xiaoping 邓小平, person's name

dongba 东巴, Naxi religious specialist

Dongfeng 东风村 Village

Duoxu 多须, ethnic group in China

dzu<sup>33</sup>dzu<sup>33</sup>, drum

dzu<sup>33</sup>mi<sup>21</sup>dzo<sup>33</sup>tso<sup>21</sup> su<sup>33</sup>, ritual that ensures a woman becomes pregnant and does not miscarry

E

Ersu 尔苏, ethnic group in China

F

fu<sup>21</sup>fu<sup>33</sup>, sickness caused by evil spirits that manifests as dizziness and joint pain

fu<sup>21</sup>na<sup>54</sup>, plant name

G

ga<sup>54</sup>ha<sup>54</sup>, mountain deities and the p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>'s previous teachers' spirits (ga<sup>54</sup> = dga བྱା; ha<sup>54</sup> = lha བྱା); sacrifice place; deities; deceased ancestral spirits

ga<sup>54</sup>ha<sup>54</sup> kʰi<sup>33</sup> nda<sup>54</sup>, 'good deities/ spirits'; 'good luck';

ga<sup>54</sup>ha<sup>54</sup> qʰ vu<sup>33</sup>, 'calling the deities and spirits', deity calling that is

chanted at the beginning of every ritual  
 gtor ma ཁྱାତ୍ମା, cone-shaped, ritual food offerings  
 ga<sup>21</sup>mo<sup>54</sup>, person's name  
 gvu<sup>21</sup>cy<sup>33</sup>, Nuosu  
 gvu<sup>21</sup>cy<sup>33</sup> p<sup>ha</sup><sup>54</sup> tsə<sup>54</sup>, Nuosu *bimo*  
 Guifeng 贵峰, person's name  
 Guizhou 贵州 Province

H

Han 漢, name of a nationality in China  
 hangui 汉规, Pumi religious specialist  
 hū<sup>21</sup>p<sup>h</sup>u<sup>54</sup>, ritual offering of chicken feathers  
 hū<sup>33</sup>mbu<sup>33</sup>, toasted, popped buckwheat  
 Huang 黃, family name

J

Jinping 锦屏 Restaurant  
 Jiulong 九龙 County  
 jy<sup>33</sup>la<sup>21</sup>rə<sup>21</sup>ko<sup>21</sup> su<sup>21</sup>, ritual name

K

ka<sup>21</sup>jy<sup>21</sup>, evils, ghosts  
 ka<sup>21</sup>jy<sup>21</sup>pi<sup>21</sup> su<sup>21</sup>, ritual name  
 k<sup>h</sup>a<sup>21</sup>, a bamboo basket

L

la<sup>21</sup> zu<sup>33</sup> (*la rou* 腊肉), dried, smoked pork  
 Lhasa བྱାସ (Lasa 拉萨), place name  
 li<sup>33</sup>bu<sup>33</sup> sə<sup>21</sup>pə<sup>54</sup>, person's name  
 Liangshan Yi 凉山彝 Autonomous Prefecture  
 li<sup>33</sup>bu<sup>33</sup> da<sup>21</sup>ndi<sup>21</sup>, person's name  
 Libu Lakhi (Li Jianfu 李建富), person's name  
 Liu 刘, family name  
 Luo-Yu 罗-瑜, location name  
 Luodu Gezu (lo<sup>21</sup>tbu<sup>33</sup> gə<sup>21</sup>dzu<sup>33</sup>), person's name  
 Luoguodi 锣锅底, place name

‡

la<sup>21</sup> pi<sup>21</sup>za<sup>21</sup>, deity chanting

M

Mao Zedong 毛泽东, person's name

mbo<sup>54</sup>k<sup>h</sup>o<sup>54</sup> pbu<sup>21</sup> su<sup>33</sup>, ritual name

Mianning 冕宁 County

Minsheng 民胜 Township

Mosuo 摩梭, ethnic group in China

mu<sup>54</sup>ba<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>21</sup>, lightning

mu<sup>54</sup>gvu<sup>54</sup>, thunder

Muli 木里 Tibetan Autonomous County

N

na<sup>54</sup>mzi<sup>54</sup> k<sup>h</sup>a<sup>21</sup>tho<sup>21</sup>, language spoken by Namuyi

na<sup>33</sup>ŋgvu<sup>54</sup>, person's name

Namuyi 纳木依 (Namuzi 納木茲), small group of people in China  
officially classified as Tibetan

Naxi 纳西, ethnic group in China

ndza<sup>33</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>, a tree's name

Nima Lhasa, nyi ma lhasa ཉི་མ་ལྷ་ສା, ni<sup>33</sup>ma<sup>33</sup> t<sup>h</sup>a<sup>21</sup>sa<sup>21</sup>, location

nimu 尼姆 (tsho<sup>21</sup>pi<sup>21</sup>, Nuosu = ts<sup>h</sup>o<sup>33</sup> pi<sup>33</sup>), ritual of expiation of the dead  
in which a white horse is used to send away the deceased's  
soul

no<sup>33</sup>su<sup>33</sup> do<sup>21</sup> ma<sup>33</sup>, Nuosu speech

no<sup>33</sup>su<sup>33</sup> ho<sup>21</sup>, Nuosu language

Number One Xichang People's Hospital, Xi chang di yi ren min yi  
yuan 西昌第一人民医院

Nuosu 诺苏, Yi, ethnic group in China

ŋ

ŋa<sup>21</sup>t<sup>h</sup>eo<sup>21</sup>, five [fifth] circle

ɳ

ɳa<sup>21</sup>mbo<sup>33</sup>, wild plant used as string

ɳi<sup>33</sup>ma<sup>33</sup> t<sup>h</sup>a<sup>21</sup>sa<sup>21</sup>, (nyima lhasa ཉི་མ་ལྷ་ສା)

O

o<sup>33</sup>ndzo<sup>21</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>, person's name

P

Paimuyi 拍木依, ethnic group in China

pje<sup>21</sup>ka<sup>21</sup>p<sup>h</sup>ṣə<sup>54</sup> su<sup>33</sup>, ritual name

pæ<sup>21</sup>hæ<sup>33</sup>, wood horn

p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>, traditional Namuyi religious practitioner who chants and

conducts religious rituals  
 p<sup>h</sup>æ<sup>33</sup>mi<sup>33</sup>, a religious specialist  
 p<sup>h</sup>i<sup>54</sup>tca<sup>21</sup>pi<sup>21</sup> su<sup>21</sup>, ritual name  
 p<sup>h</sup>u<sup>54</sup>ji<sup>33</sup>la<sup>21</sup>dzy<sup>21</sup>k<sup>h</sup>vu<sup>21</sup>, place name  
 Pumi 普米, ethnic group in China  
 pi<sup>21</sup>dzi<sup>21</sup>ko<sup>21</sup>, ritual name

## Q

q<sup>h</sup>vu<sup>21</sup>t<sup>h</sup>eo<sup>21</sup>, six [sixth] circle

Qijin 七斤, person's name

Qinghai Normal University, Qing hai shi fan da xue 青海师范大学  
 qo<sup>33</sup>bu<sup>33</sup>, a p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>54</sup>tsə<sup>54</sup>'s previous teachers' spirits

## R

ræ<sup>33</sup>bu<sup>33</sup> p<sup>h</sup>u<sup>21</sup>, ritual name

## B

bu<sup>21</sup>ly<sup>33</sup>, turnip

bu<sup>21</sup>t<sup>h</sup>ey<sup>54</sup> ræ<sup>21</sup>, soup made from pickled turnip tops with salt and cut-up  
 potatoes added

bu<sup>21</sup>t<sup>h</sup>ey<sup>54</sup>, pickled turnip tops

bu<sup>33</sup>lu<sup>33</sup>t<sup>h</sup>ə<sup>21</sup> su<sup>33</sup>, ritual name

## S

Shaba 沙坝 Town

Shaba 沙巴, Ersu Tibetan religious specialist

se<sup>21</sup>p<sup>h</sup>u<sup>33</sup>, ritual offering of blood

Sichuan 四川 Province

su<sup>21</sup>li<sup>33</sup>mu<sup>33</sup>, ritual done after a death in the family

## §

sa<sup>54</sup>da<sup>54</sup> (Shada 沙达), person's name

se<sup>21</sup>, type of tree

se<sup>54</sup>, disease caused by mu<sup>54</sup>gvu<sup>54</sup> 'thunder'

se<sup>54</sup>pi<sup>21</sup> su<sup>21</sup>, ritual name

se<sup>21</sup>t<sup>h</sup>eo<sup>21</sup>, seven [seventh] circle

so<sup>21</sup> su<sup>33</sup>, ritual name

## T

tbu<sup>21</sup> pæ<sup>21</sup>pæ<sup>33</sup>, gtor ma-like cones

t<sup>h</sup>eo<sup>33</sup>, the Torch Festival

tca<sup>21</sup>se<sup>54</sup>, ritual offering of cooked meat

ti<sup>21</sup>tco<sup>33</sup>, one [first] circle

ts<sup>h</sup>o<sup>21</sup>pi<sup>21</sup> su<sup>21</sup>, ritual name

tsə<sup>54</sup>ma<sup>21</sup>pi<sup>21</sup>, ritual name

tsə<sup>54</sup>so<sup>21</sup> su<sup>33</sup>, ritual name

ts<sup>h</sup>a<sup>21</sup>la<sup>21</sup>pbu<sup>54</sup>, holy mountain in Dashui Village that is considered to be male

ts<sup>h</sup>a<sup>21</sup>la<sup>21</sup>ma<sup>54</sup>, holy mountain in Dashui Village that is considered to be female

ts<sup>h</sup>ə<sup>33</sup>lu<sup>33</sup>, round piece of metal with an attached striker

tbu<sup>21</sup>pæ<sup>21</sup>pæ<sup>33</sup>, gtor ma-like cones

V

vu<sup>33</sup>dzə<sup>33</sup>ko<sup>21</sup>ko<sup>21</sup>, smoked sausage

vu<sup>21</sup>ṣə<sup>54</sup>, ritual offering of roasted meat

va<sup>53</sup>tṣa<sup>33</sup>, person's name

X

Xiangshui 响水 Township, Xiangshui Village

Xichang 西昌 City

Xifan 西番, Western barbarian

Xining 西宁 City

Xumi 须米, ethnic group in China

Y

Yanyuan 盐源 County

Yi 彝, Nuosu, ethnic group in China

Z

za<sup>21</sup>, manifestation of a mountain deity

zə<sup>21</sup>kvu<sup>33</sup>pi<sup>21</sup> su<sup>21</sup>, ritual name

Zeyuan 泽远 Township

Zhu Xiaohua 朱晓华, person's name